



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CENTER
AND PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY
PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, CA 93944-5006**

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

ATZP-CDR

12 Feb 04

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Command Policy on Religious Expression in the Workplace

1. References:

a. The White House, Guidelines on Religious Exercise and Religious Expression in the Federal Workplace, 14 Aug 97.

b. AR 165-1, Chaplain Activities in the United States Army, 24 Mar 98.

c. AR 600-20, Army Command Policy, 13 May 02.

d. DA Pamphlet 600-75, Accommodating Religious Practices, 22 Sep 93

e. FM 1-05, Religious Support, Apr 02.

f. DLIFLC Professional Code of Ethics dated 3 May 93.

g. DLIFLC and POM Command Policy on Improper Relationship, 12 Apr 02.

2. Purpose: To address the issue of free exercise of religion in the workplace. These guidelines will protect appropriate religious expression as well as address the exercise of inappropriate religious speech or behavior that impedes the mission of the Institute.

3. Applicability: This policy applies to all military and Department of Defense civilian personnel, and contract employees assigned, attached, located, or employed on the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center and Presidio of Monterey (DLIFLC & POM).

4. Proponent: The proponent for this policy is the Installation's Chaplain Office, ATZP-CH, at extensions 7620/5405. This policy supersedes the previous policy dated 2 July 2001.

5. Religion within DLIFLC Schools:

a. Religious Speech in General.

(1) Faculty members must set the example of religious tolerance by treating each other and their students with civility and respect.

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(2) Personal attacks, name-calling, ridicule and similar tactics destroy a positive work environment and will not be tolerated by the Institute.

(3) Faculty and staff are expected to teach objective facts about area religions as a part of the accepted curriculum. Personal opinions, beliefs, and faith commitments are not a part of the accepted curriculum.

b. Public Areas.

(1) Materials of a religious nature are not authorized to be posted anywhere in the school, including all bulletin boards.

(2) Activities sponsored by the chaplain's office are an exception to this policy and can be posted on school bulletin boards.

(3) Non-military staff and faculty members may wear discreet religious articles if the articles do not distract from the mission of language instruction.

(4) Religious materials can be present in personal work areas and must conform to the "Personal Work Areas" guidelines.

c. Personal Work Areas.

(1) Discreet religious articles may be kept in personal work areas.

(2) Individuals in the school may utilize religious articles, such as devotional books, scriptures or prayer beads, if done in a non-disruptive manner when the individual is not expected to be engaged in school activities.

(3) Any material that discredits, denigrates or is in any way defamatory toward any religious tradition cannot be displayed in the school. This includes personal work areas.

d. The Use of Religious Texts in the Classroom. The use of religious texts as a supplemental teaching aid is appropriate if it serves a sound educational goal. Religious texts are used in the classroom in coordination with the teaching team to assure that the use of these texts serves the goals of the curriculum. If the teaching team is unable to resolve an issue, the department chairperson is the final authority.

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e. The Use of Religious Symbols in the Classroom.

(1) When coordinated with the teaching team, religious symbols as examples of religious or cultural heritage can be used as teaching aids. Religious symbols should only be displayed on a temporary basis in the classroom as part of the academic program.

(2) When coordinated with the teaching team, the use of art, music, drama, or literature with religious themes can be used if it serves a sound educational goal in the curriculum, but not if used as a vehicle for promoting religious belief.

f. Teaching about Religious Holidays. Teaching about religious holidays is a legitimate academic exercise when its goal is to enhance the students' understanding of the target language and culture. The purpose must be education, not indoctrination. Teaching about religious holidays is part of the curriculum on cultural studies; however, using one's professional position to impose a celebration of religious holidays is not permissible in the DLI classroom.

Encl
Appendix A



MICHAEL R. SIMONE
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Commanding

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APPENDIX A

EXAMPLES

PERSONAL WORK AND PUBLIC AREAS

Each of the following situations can be resolved by applying the guidelines to the facts. In every circumstance it is absolutely critical that leaders have a firm grasp of the facts before applying the guidelines.

Scenario 1: Faculty member X arrives ten minutes early each day and begins his day in silent meditation in his office. Other faculty members are uncomfortable because they do not share his faith and yet are exposed to his religious practices.

Response: This scenario involves the Personal Work Area. Applying the guidelines, religious articles and scriptures may be used so long as such use is not disruptive and at a time when the instructor is not engaged in his or her duties. In this case, despite the objection of other employees, faculty member X's quiet meditation in the privacy of his own office, before the official duty day, should be accommodated.

Let's change the facts. The faculty member's practice becomes loud or is conducted in a common work area where other faculty members also work. Leaders have authority to ask the faculty member to stop given these new facts, but should look for other ways to reasonably accommodate the instructor consistent with the guidelines.

Scenario 2: Three faculty members gather for a scripture study in one of their offices once a week during lunch. They are sometimes loud and often are laughing. Other faculty members complain that they are deprived of a quiet area to eat lunch and/or study.

Response: Although these faculty members are meeting during their lunch hour, so as not to encroach on official duty time, the manner in which they are exercising their religious beliefs is disruptive. The issue here is not the activity, but the noise level. Leaders in this scenario should ask the faculty members to tone down their activity or advise them to move it elsewhere. Applying the personal work area guidelines, these faculty members are not acting in a "non-disruptive" manner.

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Scenario 3: Faculty member Y keeps a copy of his scripture at his desk and reads it at every opportunity. When approached by his team leader he responds that his colleagues spend more time on smoke breaks than he spends reading his scriptures.

Response: Again, the personal work area guidelines apply. The issue in this scenario is whether the faculty member is exercising his religion at times when he should be performing his official duties. As is the case with all potential distractions from duty (watching TV, smoke breaks, reading magazines), leaders have authority to prohibit unofficial activities when employees should be conducting official activities. The key here is to ensure that the leader is even-handed in the approach. If other faculty members are given flexibility to take smoke breaks then this faculty member should not be singled out for taking a "prayer break."

Scenario 4: A faculty member brings in a large cloth with a prominent religious symbol on it and drapes it over her bookcase. Her mother who died last week made the cloth. No one complains.

Response: Applying the guidelines, the issue in this scenario is whether the cloth is "discreet." The facts tell us that the display of this cloth has not caused a disruption and is draped in the faculty member's office. So far so good. The leader must decide, taking into account the climate of this particular work environment, whether such a display is "discreet." If the display amounts to a religious shrine, even when displayed in a private office, it is inappropriate for the federal workplace. On the other hand, if the cloth will not offend others in the workplace, and does not detract from the professional environment required of all employees, the leader may permit its display. Keep in mind, however, that leaders must be consistent. What is permitted may become the standard.

Scenario 5: A faculty member, excited about her church picnic, posts a flyer on the school bulletin board, announcing the event and listing the faculty member as the POC for those interested in attending the picnic or seeking more information about her church.

Response: This is inappropriate under the guidelines on Public Areas. Only materials provided by the Chaplain's Office may be posted. The Army Chaplaincy enjoys a special status in support of providing for the religious needs of our service members and, therefore, is authorized to post notices. Faculty members and others, however, are not authorized to use the school environment to announce religious activities or events sponsored by religious organizations.

INSTRUCTION: RELIGIOUS SPEECH, TEXTS & SYMBOLS

As mentioned above, leaders must acquire a solid grasp of the facts in each case, and then apply the guidelines.

Scenario 1: Faculty member W often answers students' questions by using examples found in a religious text. The students respond well to his teaching style but other faculty members feel he is "pushing" his religious beliefs.

Response: The leader's analysis in this case must focus on the teaching curriculum. If the faculty member's use of the religious text is consistent with the curriculum, it is permitted. On the other hand, if the faculty member is supplementing the curriculum and has not coordinated that supplementation with the teaching team or department chairperson, then use of the text is inappropriate and leaders should counsel the faculty member appropriately. The analysis is the same for the use of religious symbols in the classroom.

Scenario 2: During a culture class a student asks about the personal religious beliefs of the faculty member.

Response: Under the guidelines on Religious Speech in general, faculty members are expected, as part of their official duties, to provide instruction on religion consistent with the academic curriculum. Personal beliefs, however, are not relevant to the instructional mission. The sharing of such beliefs with students is inappropriate. Faculty members caught in this situation should politely inform students that such a discussion would be inappropriate and highlight the mission-related significance of studying religion—to obtain an objective understanding of the social and cultural environments to which they may be exposed as linguists.

Scenario 3: A student raises a religious question about a news story; however, because of her strong views, the faculty member feels unable to offer an objective response.

Response: A leader's analysis in this situation is much the same as that outlined in "Response to Situation 2." Faculty members do not have to ignore current events in their classrooms. They must refrain, however, from sharing their personal views on such topics.

The best response in this case is for the faculty member to suggest that the student research the issue outside the classroom and share his or her findings with the class at a later time. If the faculty member is well informed on the issue and can use the news story to advance a curriculum-driven learning goal in an unemotional and objective manner, then discussion is appropriate. Unfortunately, those aren't the facts in this scenario.

Scenario 4: A student makes a joke or comment that belittles or denigrates a religious belief or an individual.

Response: Personal attacks or derogatory remarks are simply not tolerated. Faculty members are often the first line of defense at the Institute for teaching young service members the principles of mutual respect and dignity.

HELPLINE: *Leaders should consult SJA, Chaplain, CPAC, or EEO/EOA representatives when dealing with religious expression issues. You are not alone!*